



# Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

For immediate release: June 4, 2001 (00-21)

Contact: Mike Klaus (509) 225-2609  
Mike Louisell (360) 902-1813

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

P.O. Box 42560, Olympia, Washington 98504-2560

## **Eastern Washington focus of apple maggot trapping**

OLYMPIA — The state Department of Agriculture is conducting an important insect survey beginning in mid-June that includes a special focus on Ellensburg, Yakima and Wenatchee. Trappers last year caught 12 apple maggots, a serious fruit pest, in Ellensburg, prompting increased trapping there this summer, according to entomologists at the state Department of Agriculture. An established population of apple maggot can result in a serious economic impact on the fruit industry.

This year's survey will determine whether the apple maggot fly has established in Ellensburg, Yakima, Wenatchee or elsewhere. Such surveys have been conducted for nearly 20 years. The 1996 survey in Yakima yielded five apple maggot flies and prompted a more intensive trapping and control program conducted in 1997-2000.

The 1998 survey yielded two apple maggot flies in Yakima and two flies in Ellensburg. The 1998 catches prompted extra Department of Agriculture trapping efforts and local pest board control efforts in those communities. There was one catch in Ellensburg in 1999, so trapping increased in 2000 and resulted in 12 apple maggot flies being caught at 11 sites, a troubling trend. One apple maggot was found in Wenatchee last year.

"Survey and control efforts will increase in Ellensburg this year," said Mike Klaus, project entomologist at the Department of Agriculture's Yakima office. Control efforts, ranging from spraying to fruit or tree removal, have been carried out by horticultural pest and disease boards in Yakima, Kittitas, and Chelan/Douglas counties in recent years. Significantly, fruit inspections at all Eastern Washington catch sites revealed no infested fruit.

Ellensburg residents have been invited to an open house for an explanation of trapping efforts and officials will ask residents for help in identifying hard-to-find host trees on their property. WSU Master Gardeners will provide information regarding backyard fruit trees and tips on keeping trees pest free. The meeting will take place from 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. June 6 at the Hal Holmes Community Center, 201 N Ruby, Ellensburg.

MORE

Apple maggot survey Page 2  
June 4, 2001

"Apple maggot larvae burrow throughout infested fruit turning it brown and mushy," said Klaus, noting the trapping and control efforts are necessary to protect one of Washington's major agricultural crops. If an infested piece of fruit is tossed out of a car or carried to an uninfected area, the insect can reproduce in the new location. Most Western Washington counties and Klickitat and Spokane counties are quarantined to prevent the spread of the insect to the state's commercial apple-growing regions. Major apple producing districts of Washington remain free of apple maggot.

Eastern Washington residents, as well as persons in Whatcom and Skagit counties, who have apple, crabapple or hawthorn trees are encouraged to participate in this year's survey. Insect traps will be set and checked by trained trappers using a special yellow panel sticky trap to detect apple maggot flies in host trees in people's yards and monitoring in trees growing wild along roadsides. Workers will hang an estimated 6,000 traps statewide for this year's program. Traps will be removed in September. Call Mike Klaus at (509) 225-2609 for more information.

###